



NEWS RELEASE

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HUDGENS OFFERS HOME HEATING SAFETY TIPS

Atlanta – With historic low temperatures expected across the state over the next several days, Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens wants to remind Georgians of some important home heating safety tips.

- Heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires in Georgia. Portable space heaters, open fireplaces and wood stoves can be dangerous if misused. Keep them away from curtains, draperies, and other flammable material. Make sure heaters have adequate ventilation, and always follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Make sure all fuel-burning appliances and fireplaces are properly vented. If you suspect a gas leak in your home, leave immediately and call the gas company from elsewhere.
- If you use kerosene space heaters, make sure each heater has an automatic shut-off in case it tips over. Use only K-1 kerosene in a space heater; gasoline can cause an explosion. Wait until the heater has cooled and take it outside before refueling.
- Install an adequate number of smoke alarms. Most fatal fires start between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., while the family is asleep. The advance warning of a smoke alarm may mean the difference between life and death. Nine out of 10 fire victims are already dead before the fire department is even called, mainly from smoke and toxic gases.
- Each household should have a well-rehearsed family escape plan. All rooms, especially bedrooms, should have two escape routes. Have a predetermined meeting place outside the house so you can be sure everyone is out safely.

In 2015, fire has claimed the lives of twenty Georgians.